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ABSTRACT. The registration of spacecraft, including their launch dates, is handled in the United Nations in response to an order of the General Assembly on December 20, 1961. International centers have been established for gathering and exchanging data on space launches in the USA, USSR, and Great Britain also, in accord with the International Geophysical Year program.

On December 20, 1961, the General Assembly of the United Nations appealed /25* to all governments launching space objects with a proposal "to present information for registering launches without delay to a Committee on Using Outer Space for Peaceful Purposes", and suggested that the Secretary General "carry out an information registration accessible to all" (resolution 1721/XVI). Such registration was carried out by the United Nations Secretary General beginning in March, 1962. Data contained in such communications were included in a register, and were disseminated in the form of a special United Nations document.

In accordance with the practice established, the information being presented to the United Nations included all space launches, also covering the launches of objects placed in orbit, but did not remain long in orbit. Including objects which did not reach orbit in such reports is too complicated for the time being.

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* Numbers in the margin indicate the pagination in the original foreign text.

(1) Doctor of Jurisprudence

Information presented in the United Nations by the Soviet Union and the United States coincide to a significant degree. They include the serial code designation of the space object (USSR name) or their international designation (USA), the launch date, perigee, apogee, and orbital inclination angle to the equatorial plane.

Information on space launches presented to the United Nations by the Soviet Union contains, along with this, the serial number of the object, and also a short statement of the basic purpose of the launch.

The United States relates each space object to one of the following four categories: A--developing techniques and methods for space flights, B--space exploration and research, C--practical application of space engineering, D--objects not fulfilling any particular function. The United States also gives the name of the rocket booster with whose help the object was lifted into space.

Besides the USA and USSR, Italy, France, and Australia give out information on space launches. A tendency to attach serial code designations (names) to the objects launched into space has been clearly evident. For example, Soviet objects received the designations "Cosmos-312","Molniya-1 (Flash-1)", "Zond-7 (Probe-7), etc. France gave a code number for the satellite along with the international designation -- "France-1". In the same way Italy gave -- "San Marco-1" and "San Marco-2", and Australia, -- "WRESAT". The code name "ESRO" is attached to satellites launched by the European organization for outer space research.

The United Nations is not the only organization concerned with registering launches. International centers for gathering and exchanging data on space launches were established in the USA, USSR, and Great Britain in accord with the International Geophysical Year program.

In addition, Goddard Space Flight Center of the US National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) periodically publishes documents which contain

data, computed and drawn up by the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory.

The aviation ministry in England is also concerned with gathering information on various launches. A number of specialized magazines publish information on launches into space.

The United States and France use a system for the international name of a space object which was accepted by the Committee for Outer Space Research -- COSPAR.

According to the COSPAR directorate on drawing up information releases about rockets, satellites, and data exchanges, worked out in 1962, the naming arrangement for space objects is the following. The first space object launched in a new year, for example, in 1970, is name "1970-1", the second, "1970-2", etc.

For launches using a single booster rocket for several space objects, a letter of the Latin alphabet is added to each name. For example, an object carrying primary scientific equipment is designated by the letter "A", and objects with auxiliary payloads or of secondary significance are designated by the letters "B", "C", "D", etc.

Thus, the US spacecraft "Apollo-5" received the international designation "1968-7A", and "Apollo-8", "1968-108A"; the US "Explorer" series satellites, launched in 1968, were "Explorer-XXXVI", -- "1968-2A", and "Explorer XL" -- "1968-66B".

For joint space object launches by several governments, the participants have to agree which one will make the report to the United Nations Committee.

During 1968 and 1969, four satellites belonging to the European organization for outer space research -- ESRO, were launched from the United States firing range in California. Ten countries have entered into this organization

-- England, Belgium, Holland, Denmark, Spain, Italy, West Germany, France, Switzerland, and Sweden. France presented the information to the United Nations Committee in the name of all the member-states. This way it was functioning in the role of trustee of the international convention which created ESRO.

International registration of space launches should be distinct from national space object registration.

The former includes the register data voluntarily presented by governments to the United Nations Committee for Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. Entering these data in the register, carried out by the United Nations Secretary General, involves no kind of legal consequence. Such a registration can be considered as a definite form of information exchange. In the latter case, the whole complex of legal consequences is tied in with registration (jurisdiction, right of ownership, responsibility for damages, etc.).

A space object, entered on the register of a definite government, has to bear (that governments) signs of recognition, which would be used to establish state (national) ownership of the space object and its constituent parts. True, in the agreement of January 27, 1967, on space, there are no statutes which would regulate the arrangement of such marks aboard space objects. However, in accordance with article VIII of this Agreement, if marking signs should be found on a space object or its parts, that government in whose register this object is entered "has to request return of the marked data".

The arrangement for registration of space objects is indisputably a question of the internal competence of a government. Nonetheless, this circumstance does not exclude the possibility of definitely unifying such national registration on the international level in the future. In 1968, France submitted, for the consideration of the Jurisprudence subcommittee of the United Nations Committee on Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, a proposed Convention "For registration of objects launched into outer space for the purpose of

studying or using outer space." The French proposal is based on the fact that /26
each government will itself set the legal norms relative to arranging national registration of space objects. In addition, France suggested establishing minimum data in the Convention, which the entries pertinent to each space object have to contain in the register.

The matter of registering space objects belonging to international, intergovernmental organizations is complicated.

As is well known, the matter of arranging registration of sea vessels operated in the official service of international, intergovernmental organizations and sailing under their flags is still not resolved. Also not resolved is the question of national airlines being used by international agencies.

It is our opinion that in the joint activities of a number of governments in launching objects into space, also including international, intergovernmental organizations, the participants in an agreement, or the members of the organization, will have to decide the question as in which government register the space object is to be included.

In Western literature the opinion is widespread that an understanding of governmental ownership (nationality) of space objects has no meaning and ought to be tossed out once and for all. There is no serious basis for acquiescing to approval of such a matter. Indeed, it is clear that national registration of space objects, not only is no replacement for, but also does not conceal its governmental ownership (nationality).

A space object has to have a "nationality". State ownership of a space object will depend on it, and also jurisdiction over it. Speaking of Soviet and American spacecraft, or English, French, Canadian, Italians satellites, we have in mind their governmental ownership (nationality). Through further successes in mastering an understanding of space, "nationality", undoubtedly, will acquire more and more significance.

At the same time, joint activities of governments in space studies will spread, and the role of international organizations will increase.

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